

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method of developing product characteristics for a new product comprising the steps of:

- 5 generating a plurality of product attributes;
 classifying each of said attributes;
 generating a preferred product brand position
 as a function of said product attributes; and
 generating target product characteristics as
10 a function of said classified product attributes and
 said preferred product brand position, said target
 product characteristics representing customer-driven
 objectives for each of said plurality of product
 attributes.

15 2. A method as recited in claim 1 wherein
 the step of generating a plurality of product
 attributes comprises the steps of providing a plurality
 of summary attributes and a clarifying definition for
 each of said summary attributes, said clarifying
20 definition providing a relationship between each of
 said product attributes and the type of product under
 development.

25 3. A method as recited in claim 1 wherein
 the step of generating a plurality of product
 attributes includes the step of providing a detailed
 definition for each of said product attributes, each of
 said detailed definitions providing a context for each
 attribute as it relates to the product under
 development.

30 4. A method as recited in claim 1 wherein
 the step of classifying each of said attributes

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attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set.

10. A method as recited in claim 9 wherein the step of associating each of said product attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set includes the step of prioritizing each product attribute in one of four levels, said first level representing a desire for the product attribute to be a leader (L) with respect to the competitive set, said second level representing a desire for the product attribute to be among the leaders (A) with respect to the competitive set, said third level representing a desire for the product attribute to be competitive (C) with respect to the competitive set, and said fourth level representing a desire for the product attribute to be minimally competitive (M) with respect to the competitive set.

11. A method as recited in claim 7 wherein the step of generating a primary brand position as a function of said product attributes includes the steps of identifying a competitive set of products, and associating each of said product attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set.

12. A method as recited in claim 11 wherein the step of associating each of said product attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set includes the step of prioritizing each product attribute in one of four levels, said first level representing a desire for the product attribute to be a leader (L) with respect to the competitive set, said second level representing a desire for the product

attribute to be among the leaders (A) with respect to the competitive set, said third level representing a desire for the product attribute to be competitive (C) with respect to the competitive set, and said fourth level representing a desire for the product attribute to be minimally competitive (M) with respect to the competitive set.

13. A method of developing product characteristics for a new automotive vehicle comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of vehicle attributes, said plurality including at least attributes from each of the following groups of vehicle characteristics: usage experience, driving experience, and design;

generating a preferred vehicle brand position as a function of said vehicle attributes; and

generating target vehicle characteristics as a function of said vehicle attributes and said preferred vehicle brand position, said target vehicle characteristics representing customer-driven objectives for each of said plurality of vehicle attributes.

14. A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the step of generating a plurality of vehicle attributes comprises the steps of providing a plurality of summary attributes and a clarifying definition for each of said summary attributes said clarifying definition providing further detail relating each of said vehicle attributes to a vehicle characteristic.

15. A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the step of generating a plurality of vehicle attributes includes the step of providing a detailed definition for each of said vehicle attributes each of

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preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set.

25. A method as recited in claim 24 wherein the step of associating each of said vehicle attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set includes the step of prioritizing each vehicle attribute in one of four levels, said first level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be a leader (L) with respect to the competitive set, said second level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be among the leaders (A) with respect to the competitive set, said third level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be competitive (C) with respect to the competitive set, and said fourth level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be minimally competitive (M) with respect to the competitive set.

26. A method as recited in claim 16 wherein the step of classifying each of said attributes includes the step of classifying design attributes differently than usage experience attributes and driving experience attributes.

27. A method as recited in claim 26 wherein the step of classifying each of said attributes includes the step of classifying each design attribute on a scale having more gradients than the classification scale for classifying usage experience attributes or driving experience attributes.

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28. A method of developing product characteristics for a new automotive vehicle comprising the steps of:

5 generating a plurality of vehicle attributes, said plurality including at least attributes from each of the following groups of vehicle characteristics: usage experience, driving experience, and design;

10 providing target customer characteristics; providing target vehicle image characteristics; thereafter

generating a preferred vehicle brand position as a function of said vehicle attributes, said target customer characteristics, and said target vehicle image characteristics; and

15 generating target vehicle objectives as a function of said vehicle attributes and said preferred vehicle brand position, said target vehicle objectives representing customer-driven and image-driven characteristics for each of said plurality of vehicle attributes.

29. A method as recited in claim 28 wherein the step of providing target customer characteristics comprises the step of providing a brand positioning summary.

25 30. A method as recited in claim 29 wherein said brand positioning summary includes target customer defining characteristics, target customer selection rationales, a summary of the new vehicles' role in the product portfolio, a competitive assessment, enduring reasons why a customer may purchase the new vehicle,

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31. A method as recited in claim 28 wherein the step of providing target vehicle image characteristics comprises the step of providing a brand bullseye.

5 32. A method as recited in claim 28 further comprising the step of providing a cross-functional product team and wherein said cross-functional product team is responsible for the steps of generating a preferred vehicle brand position and generating target
10 vehicle objectives.

33. A method as recited in claim 32 wherein said cross-functional product team includes at least one member from each of the following corporate departments: vehicle program management, marketing,
15 purchasing, finance, engineering, and design.

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